

Worksheet E: Culture and Diversity

1.



2. We have become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams.
--Jimmy Carter (b. 1924), US President

Questions:

- What is the difference between a melting pot and a mosaic? Do you think one is a better analogy than the other? Why?
- Is there a different model you would suggest?

3. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stifled. I want all the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.
--Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948), Indian political and spiritual leader

Questions:

- What are the potential dangers of diversity?
- Have you ever felt like you were "blown off your feet" by another culture? Is that bad? If so, how can we protect against it?

4. Legal Alien

Bi-lingual, Bi-cultural,
able to slip from "How's life?"
to "Me'stan volviendo loca,"
able to sit in a paneled office
drafting memos in smooth English,
able to order in fluent Spanish
at a Mexican restaurant,
American but hyphenated,
viewed by Anglos as perhaps exotic,
perhaps inferior, definitely different,
viewed by Mexicans as alien,
(their eyes say, "You may speak
Spanish but you're not like me")
an American to Mexicans
a Mexican to Americans
a handy token
sliding back and forth
between the fringes of both worlds
by smiling
by masking the discomfort
of being pre-judged
Bi-laterally.

--Pat Mora (b. 1942), *Poet*

Questions:

- What does it mean to be a "hyphenated" American?
- What is the author's experience of being bi-cultural?
- Do you think this type of experience is inevitable? Why or why not?